



Intelligence Information Report

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COUNTRY

Poland/Warsaw Pact/USSR

SUBJECT

The Unified Wartime Command System for the Combined
Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact
(DOI: Late 1981)

SOURCE

[Redacted Source Information]

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Comment and Summary: The Statute for the Wartime Command of the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact was drafted in accordance with a November 1978 resolution of the Political Consultative Committee (PCC) of the Warsaw Pact. The draft was approved by the Committee of Defense Ministers (CDM) of the Warsaw Pact on 4 December 1979. It was formally ratified in the name of the Warsaw Pact member states in January 1980 by the signatures of the First Secretaries of the Communist Parties and the Prime Ministers of the member states. It was never presented at a formal meeting of the PCC. Based on the 1978 PCC resolution, a set of Unified Readiness and Alert Procedures was presented to the Warsaw Pact member states in a directive of the Commander in Chief of the Combined Armed Forces (CAF) in the fall of 1979. Other protocols associated with the Statute have been signed since 1979 naming L. I. Brezhnev as Supreme Commander in Chief of the CAF, designating the Soviet General Staff as his control organ, establishing the table of organization for the wartime command organs, allocating national economic reserves to the CAF, etc. This Statute with its associated protocols and directives established the Unified Wartime Command System (UWCS), comprising the legal and military technical systems for the centralized command and control of

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the military, economic, political and scientific resources of the Warsaw Pact member states in wartime. On page 8 of this report is a table showing the High Command of the Western Theater of Military Operations. Romania, according to the source, has been the only member state to steadfastly refuse to sign any PCC resolutions or CDM resolutions since November 1978 which have dealt with the Statute, or to implement completely the unified readiness and alert procedures.)

1. According to the terms of the Wartime Command Statute, the Supreme High Command (SHC) of the Combined Armed Forces (CAF) will exercise total operational command and control in the fullest sense of these terms over all the armed forces and state resources of the Warsaw Pact member states which have been allocated to the CAF through the appropriate protocols. In addition, the SHC in peacetime will coordinate and oversee the development of those forces and means allocated to the CAF by the member states. The Statute names the Soviet General Staff as the control organ of the SHC and charges it with overseeing and guaranteeing the implementation of all orders, directives and instructions of the SHC throughout the CAF in peace and war. In the Unified Wartime Command System (UWCS) the SHC exercises command and control of the strategic and operational commands of the CAF through the Soviet General Staff. Furthermore, the UWCS assigns to the SHC the power to assume effective control over all the national forces and resources not specifically allocated to the CAF in the theaters of military operations.

2. Various provisions of the Statute state that one or another action will be undertaken at some future time "by mutual agreement" of the member states. However, these phrases never specify when such actions will be taken nor by what means the agreements will be reached. (Source Comment: Source noted, for example, that the Statute provides that those national forces and resources not specifically allocated to the CAF can be subsumed under SHC control by "mutual agreement." Since the Statute does not explain how or when this mutual agreement will be reached, the member states assume that when they signed the Statute in January 1980 they agreed to this clause in principle. Thus, mutual agreement has been reached.) Also, since the Soviets appear to intend to subordinate all the national military leadership from the ministers of national defense through the service commanders to the Soviet High Commands in the theaters of military operations, East European acceptance of this includes acceptance of the means to implement SHC control over all national forces and means. (Source Comment: Again, "mutual agreement" can be taken to mean anything if no specific

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conditions are attached to it.) Comment: Source was very strong in his statement that this was the approach the Soviets have used throughout the process of developing and implementing the Statute.)

3. A similar situation exists, for example, regarding the establishment of the Supreme High Command (SHC), the naming of the Supreme Commander in Chief, and the designation of the Soviet General Staff as the control organ for the SHC. The Statute states that these actions will be taken "by mutual agreement of the member states." According to Source, the East European General Staff officers who had access to the terms of the Statute (with whom Source spoke) initially assumed that these actions would take place at the point when the Statute was triggered by some international crisis. In fact, however, they were accomplished by means of a protocol concurrent with the signing of the Statute itself by the national leaders. L. I. Brezhnev was named Supreme Commander in Chief, the SHC was established, and the Soviet General Staff was designated as the control organ, "by mutual agreement of the member states." This particular act was of great significance since the only constraining factor on many of the other terms of the Statute was the requirement that they be undertaken at the order of the SHC. This includes the order to establish the wartime command organs and convert the CAF to a wartime footing.

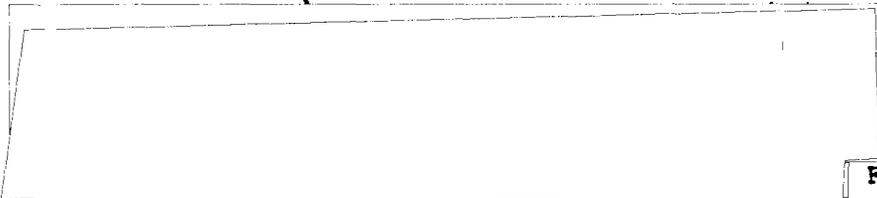
4. The UWCS makes absolutely no provision for the activity of, nor even the existence of the consultative organs of the Warsaw Pact organization in wartime. All decisions normally taken (at least in theory) by these organs in peacetime will be taken by the SHC in wartime. The UWCS does not allow for the representation of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) members in the SHC nor on the Soviet General Staff. In fact, the UWCS does not even grant a right of access to the SHC or the Soviet General Staff for the NSWP members. Thus, the Statute creates a centralized command for the CAF which is in reality a Soviet command.

5. The UWCS provides that upon the signal from the SHC, the Combined Command of the CAF will be dissolved and replaced with two theatre-level commands; the High Command of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western Theater of Military Operations, and the High Command of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Southwestern Theater of Military Operations. The Polish Armed Forces, Czechoslovak Armed Forces, the East German Armed Forces, and Soviet forces from the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG), and the Baltic, Belorussian and Carpathian

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Military Districts constitute the forces allocated to the Western Theater of Military Operations (TMO). In addition, the Polish Naval Forces, East German Naval Forces and the Soviet Baltic Fleet will constitute the Combined Baltic Fleet of the Western TMO. The High Command for the Western TMO will be constituted from the appropriate elements of the Combined HQ & Staff, and the Commander in Chief for this TMO will be Marshal V. G. ((Kulikov)). The Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Southwestern TMO will be comprised of forces from the Bulgarian Armed Forces, the Hungarian Armed Forces, (possibly the Romanian Armed Forces), the Soviet Southern Group of Forces (SGF), and Soviet forces from the Odessa and Kiev Military Districts. The Soviet Black Sea Fleet, the Mediterranean Squadron, the Bulgarian Naval Forces and theoretically the Romanian Naval Forces will constitute the Combined Black Sea Fleet of the Southwestern TMO. The High Command in this TMO will be constituted from the appropriate elements of the Combined HQ & Staff, and Army General A. I. ((Gribkov)) will be the Commander in Chief. (Source Comment: The appointments of Kulikov and Gribkov to the wartime High Command posts were not official as of early November 1981. They were rumored throughout the Soviet element of the Combined HQ & Staff, however, to be imminent, and Kulikov and Gribkov have played these positions in Pact exercises since 1979. The appointments of all personnel to the High Command HQs was to be completed by January 1982.) At the signal from the SHC, the peacetime Combined HQ & Staff of the CAF would simply divide into the nuclei of the Western and Southwestern High Commands and cease to exist as a separate entity.

6. There are three basic conditions under which the UWCS can be activated. First, the wartime command organs can be brought into being and the other terms of the Statute activated upon "mutual agreement of the Warsaw Pact member states," though once again the Statute fails to specify how this agreement will be obtained. The entire question of the political decisionmaking attending the entry of the Warsaw Pact into war has always been a great unknown. Pact exercise scenarios and training documents do not explain this. Most cognizant East Europeans believed that the SHC would simply call a meeting of the national leaders and instruct them that a threat existed and that they must act in accordance with the threat. Polish military leaders speculated that this option would only be used if the entry into war arose out of a steadily growing crisis, where time was not a critical factor. The second method of activating the UWCS is for a member state to notify the CAF CinC that the member state is threatened with aggression and that it has alerted its armed forces. At this point the CAF CinC will notify the SHC and then alert all

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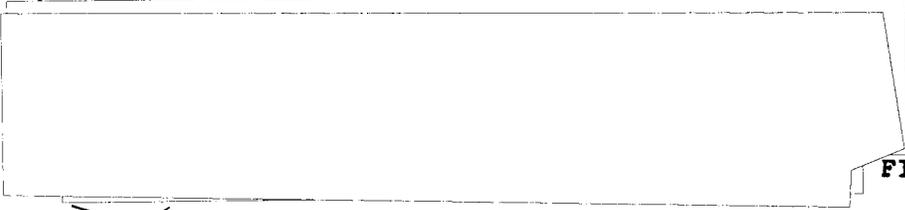
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the CAF members that the UWCS is being implemented. The third method of activating the UWCS is for the SHC to simply notify the member states that a threat to the Warsaw Pact exists and alert the CAF according to the nature of the threat. This is the option that most Poles and other East Europeans expect to occur.

7. There are no provisions in the Statute for consultation between the SHC and the national political leaderships before activation of the Wartime Command System nor are there any provisions in the Statute for the NSWP leaders to play a role in the alerting and mobilization processes of the CAF. According to the provisions of the UWCS, the SHC, through the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, can raise the CAF to full combat readiness, mobilize the Warsaw Pact member states, and initiate conflict without formal action by any of the NSWP member states' political leaderships. (Source Comment: While one might speculate that the national leaders of one or another member state might resist such acts in a crisis, it was extremely unlikely. The military and defense-related leaders in the NSWP member states were regularly drilled in these procedures and quite accustomed to taking orders directly from Moscow. In addition, the Statute and all its associated protocols and directives had been accepted by the member states in the best of times, when there was ample opportunity to organize resistance to Soviet demands and pressures, and when the Romanians had led the way. There was no good reason to believe that these same leaders, in the press of a crisis, when there was a real threat to the Warsaw Pact, and when the Soviets were clearly committed to a resort to arms, would show sufficient moral courage to resist the Soviets. The Romanians are the only ones who have shown any inclination to seriously resist the Soviets since 1969.)

8. Upon receiving the signal from the SHC to raise readiness levels, the theater High Commands will be created. At the same time the national forces and resources allocated to the CAF in the TMOs will be transferred to the command of the TMO High Commands. Those forces not directly a part of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the TMO, but allocated by protocols to the CAF will be designated as Reserves of the High Commands of the TMOs and immediately available to support the Strategic Grouping of Forces. The remaining national forces and resources will be considered Reserves of the SHC on the basis of the "mutual agreement" clause in the Statute. This condition has been played in Pact exercises since 1979, with Polish Civil Defense Troops acting under orders of the TMO High Command and Polish Territorial Troops deploying in accordance with plans of the

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TMO High Command. The National Air Forces, Naval Forces and Air Defense Forces will be completely subordinate to the TMO High Commands and may be utilized anywhere in the TMO at the discretion of the High Command or the SHC. According to the provisions of the UWCS the High Command in the TMO could utilize all defense-related industries in the TMO to repair and refit equipment of the CAF in the TMO, regardless of the nationality of the forces or the missions of the industries.

9. The following is a description of the basic structure of the High Command in the Western Theater of Military Operations. The Southwestern High Command would be identical except for nationalities.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western Theater of Military Operations;

The Chief of Staff/First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO;

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO for Political Affairs;

The Deputy Commanders-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of forces in the Western TMO for National Matters (i.e., one from each member state contributing forces to the TMO-- USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany in the West);

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO for Air Forces;

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO for Naval Forces (also Commander of the Combined Baltic Fleet);

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO for the Rear;

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO for Armaments;

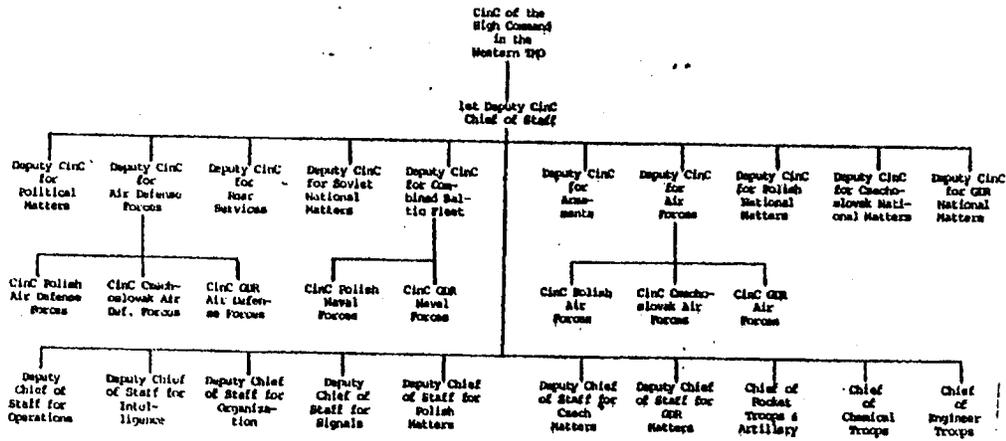
The Commanders of the arms of services in the Western TMO (e.g., the Commander of Rocket and Artillery Troops).

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HIGH COMMAND OF THE WESTERN THEATER OF MILITARY OPERATIONS
 (SOUTHWESTERN AND HIGH COMMAND IS NEARLY IDENTICAL.)

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10. The Military Council of the TMO will be the consultative organ of the Commander in Chief of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the TMO. It is comprised of the CinC, his deputies, commanders of the arms of services in the TMO, and representatives of the political directorates of the armed forces of the member states in the TMO. The Military Council will advise the CinC of the High Command, but all decisions will be taken by the CinC and executed through the control organs of the High Command.

11. The primary control organ of the High Command is the Staff of the High Command. It will be composed of an Operations Directorate, an Intelligence Directorate, a Signals Directorate, an Organization Directorate and various support elements. In addition to Deputy Chiefs of Staff for these functions, there will also be Deputy Chiefs of Staff for National Matters (one from each member of the CAF in that TMO). These latter positions have been occupied in exercises since 1979 by the senior national representatives to the CAF Staff. (Source Comment: It is possible that at some point in the future the Soviets might seek to designate the national General Staff Chiefs as the wartime Deputy Chiefs of Staff for National Matters in the TMO Staffs.)

12. The Political Directorate of the High Command in the TMO constitutes another control organ of the High Command in the TMO. The Statute provides that all party political work in the armed forces of the member states allocated to the CAF will be subordinate to the Political Directorate of the High Command in the TMO. The Statute also provides that the work of the Political Directorate of the TMO High Command will be under the direction of the CinC of the High Command and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Armed Forces. There are no provisions in the Statute for NSWP member parties to direct the work of their party organs in those forces allocated to the CAF.

13. The staffs of the branches (vid) and arms (rod) of service of the forces in the TMO also constitute additional control organs of the TMO High Command for these branches and arms. These staffs will organize and conduct their work under the supervision and direction of the Chief of Staff for the High Command of the TMO.

14. The overall personnel strength of the High Command HQ in the Western TMO is approximately 1600 officers, NCOs and civilians in its wartime configuration. While the Polish contribution to the resources of the High Command is about

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22 percent, its share of the High Command slots is about 60 officers. Comment: Source could not recall exactly the East German and Czechoslovak slot distribution in the High Command HQ, but he did recall that they felt equally under-represented relative to their contribution to the resources of the High Command.)

15. The Deputy CinCs of the High Command of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the TMO for Air Defense Forces, Air Forces and Naval Forces will simultaneously be the commanders of those forces respectively in the TMO. In addition to their regular deputy commanders, each of these will have deputies for the national forces in the TMO. These national deputies will be the national commanders of Air Defense Forces, Air Forces and Naval Forces of the NSWP members in the TMO. So, for example, the NSWP Commanders in Chief of Air Defense Forces in the Western TMO will be Deputy Commanders of Air Defense Forces of the Strategic Grouping of Forces in the Western TMO. The same applies to national naval forces and national air forces.

16. The structure of the High Command appears to be intended by the Soviets to subsume the military leadership of NSWP members in the TMO to positions of command subordinate to the High Command in the TMOs. The positions of the national CinCs of the services is clearly subordinate to the CinC of the High Command in the TMO through the branches of services in the TMO. When the NSWP members received the draft protocol from the Soviets outlining the requirements for the Deputy CinC of the High Commands in the TMOs for National Matters, the Poles proposed that the Commanders of the National Fronts be assigned to fill these slots concurrent with their Front commands. The Soviet response at the Warsaw Pact Military Council meeting in the autumn of 1981 was a flat "no." This position, according to the draft protocol, requires a four-star officer who is superior to a Front commander. The NSWP members quickly realized that only one person fit this requirement in all the NSWP armed forces and that was the National Minister of Defense. Thus, the senior military leader in each NSWP member state will be directly subordinate to the CinC of the High Command in the TMO, unless the members can persuade the Soviets to change the requirements.

Comment: Source believes this to be extremely unlikely and also observed that since 1979 the National Ministers of Defense have played the role of Deputy CinCs of the High Commands in large-scale Pact command-staff exercises. Thus, Source stated that he reasoned that ultimately the Soviets would also seek to appoint the national General Staff Chiefs to a position subordinate to the CinC of the High Command in the TMO.

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17. The Wartime Command Statute guarantees the CinC of the High Command in the TMO access to the political leadership organs of the member states in the TMO. No provision, however, is made for representation in the High Commands for the national political leadership of the member states in the TMO. The preamble documents attached to the Statute state that control over the military, political, economic and scientific resources of the member states necessary to the prosecution of combat operations in the TMO will reside solely in the High Command of the TMO. Furthermore, the Statute itself states that it is the purpose of the Statute to create the means for the centralized control of the combined forces and means of the member states to defend their national existence and the gains of socialism. The NSWP members have concluded that in the event of the activation of the Wartime Command System, the Supreme High Command and the High Commands of the TMOs would take effective control of the forces and assets of all the member states. Such national leadership organs as the National Defense Committees, while continuing to function, would be effectively subordinated to the TMO High Commands. It is a fact that the National Ministers of Defense are vice-chairmen of the National Defense Committees. Lacking any other access to the TMO High Commands, these organs would probably be forced to deal through the National Defense Ministers in the positions of Deputy CinCs of the High Commands for National Matters. Thus, the national leadership organs would be forced to acquiesce in their subordination to the CinCs of the High Commands in the TMOs. This situation is simply exacerbated by the line subordination in wartime of the senior national military leaders to the TMO High Commands.



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